

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MAY 18, 2016

TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: CARRIE SANDERS, ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR, T&ES

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM #8 – WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT
AUTHORITY (WMATA) SAFE TRACK PLAN PROPOSAL

ISSUE: Provide an update to the Transportation Commission on the Safe Track Plan Proposal.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission receive the following update.

BACKGROUND: In FY 2016, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and Federal Transit Authority (FTA) recommended a series of improvements to bring the Metrorail system into a state of good repair. While in the interim WMATA has made significant strides to address these items, balance of service needs and maintenance needs do not provide enough time to get WMATA to achieving the NTSB or FTA directives. In order to achieve the directives of NTSB and FTA, WMATA is looking to institute 15 Safety Surges that will require single tracking and segment closures for several weeks. The duration of the Safe Track Plan is slated to last a year in duration. The goal is to fit three years of work into one year.

DISCUSSION: The Safe Track Plans seeks to put forth a massive effort to address safety recommendations and rehabilitate the Metrorail system on an accelerated time frame. The results of the Safe Track Plan will result in the following improvements:

- Installation of new boots and seals on 3rd rail cables (NTSB)
- Replacement of 12,000 insulators
- Remove 3rd rail expansion joints underground
- Eliminate all temporary gauge bars that prevent track spreading
- Replace 48,000 wooden ties
- Replace approximately 36,000 direct fixation fasteners
- Clearing of 87,000 linear feet of drain
- Repair tunnel leaks

WMATA staff has dedicated up to 40 vehicles and 60 operators to assist in providing shuttles and bus bridges. WMATA with assistance of the jurisdictions are looking to provide additional support at selected stations. WMATA will work to strategically position extra trains and personnel to have quick response to customers. In addition, WMATA will request to have assistance from the jurisdictions to assist with capacity if needed. Impacts to Alexandria will take place for a duration of 68 days based on the current Safe Track Plan. During this time WMATA and the jurisdiction will work to put service plans together to assist in the mitigation of the affected Metrorail areas. City staff has begun internal meetings to discuss various options regarding impacts to the City. City staff is evaluating alternative satellite parking facilities and shuttles, traffic management strategies and telework options for City employees.

In the near future, WMATA staff will work with City staff to promote a robust outreach plan to provide to customers. In addition to the communication plan, staff hopes to receive information pertaining to the impacts of the operation and capital budget for both the remainder of FY 2016 and FY 2017. City staff will also like to have an understanding of the direct and indirect costs associated with the Safe Track Plan, and what impacts it has toward the region.

As this information becomes available and the plan is finalized, staff will continue to provide the Transportation Commission with updates.